

**Katherine Pantages**

M1: Your [All?] Holiness Archbishop Demetrios.

(break in audio)

Q: Coming back.

A: (laughs)

Q: What did I just ask you? Oh, about the help, and what your father did. So he may have helped out in the florist business until the -- he decided to go --

A: No. Now, he --

Q: No?

A: -- was --

(break in audio)

A: All right.

M1: Just --

Q: OK.

(break in audio)

A: I don't what business they were in. But my uncles were in the florist business. And when my mother came, that uncle, Steve [Massos?] -- he was a young man when he came. And evidently he saw someone selling flowers. So he bought -- this is how -- he died a millionaire many times. But he saw

this man selling flowers. So he had a dollar and he bought flowers and sold them, evidently on the street -- I don't know -- and made \$2. So the next day he bought \$2's worth of flowers and sold those -- and became, you know, more successful. And then he saw an empty stairway, my mother said, that was -- evidently must have been stairs going down someplace. Well, he bought a lot of flowers and took that little spot over and opened a little store.

M1: The store.

A: And that's how he --

Q: [Interesting?].

A: -- [got an?] (inaudible) spirit.

Q: Yeah.

M1: That's where --

A: And that's how he eventually became a big florist, and then into real estate and whatever. But that's how he started. So they all did, in very limited ways. But they were ingenious and --

Q: And wanted to work for themselves --

A: Yes.

Q: -- not somebody else.

A: That's right. But we were never in the restaurant -- "we."

None of my family was in the restaurant business, except my uncle. And Elizabeth was in the florist business. And when he retired, some friend of his was selling a little restaurant. What do they call them?

M1: Luncheonette.

A: A luncheonette or something. And he bought it. And for the last few years, he was running it. He didn't know anything about it but he had a --

Q: And which side of the family was he?

A: My mother's side.

Q: Your mother's side. So this is all your mother's side of the family.

A: Yeah.

Q: Do you know much about your father's side of the family?

A: My father's side, they all live in Connecticut and Minneapolis. They weren't close by. But I had a -- he had a brother -- he had two brothers. As a matter of fact, the one brother became a monk at Mount Athos. And the other one was in the fruit and vegetable business too. But --

Q: But not in New Jersey.

A: No, not --

Q: OK. OK. When you lived in Newark, did your life center

around the Greek-American community?

A: Yes, it did, at that point.

Q: Until you went to work.

A: Yes. And then at work, you know, I got involved there. But the Greek part was very strong. You know, my mother wanted me -- she thought I'd meet a nice Greek boy and get married, you know.

M1: (laughs)

A: As all mothers did. But I fooled her. (laughter) The only ones I liked were Jewish.

M1: Yes.

A: And she'd say, "[Adrels apan?]." And I guess I didn't like them enough to say yes.

M1: To -- yes.

Q: And then -- you met them through the business -- right? -- through -- or --?

A: Yes.

Q: Yeah. OK.

A: I met them through business. I met a lot of people. And then on my trips I met a lot of people too.

(laughter)

Q: OK. Let me must ask something about the church. And then we can go back to business --

A: OK.

Q: -- to the business. How did your family prepare for Holy Week?

A: We had a fast. And we couldn't -- my mother wouldn't do things on Sunday.

Q: Really!

A: Yeah, you know, and the day of the Lord. And, I don't know, we didn't do -- I guess we just fasted.

Q: And then you went and received communion --

A: Yeah.

Q: -- on what, Saturday? As children, do you remember --? How old were you when you moved to Newark?

A: In my 20s, I guess, 19, 20. Because I had graduated high school. No, ei--

Q: No, no.

A: -- or 18.

Q: In your late teens. Right.

A: Yeah. But we always had to fast on Friday and -- I don't remember Wednesdays.

Q: No, we didn't do --

A: [No?].

Q: I don't remember Wednesdays either.

A: No.

Q: This just --

A: Just Friday. And during Holy Week we've -- no milk, no  
nothing -- complained bitterly all the time.

(laughter)

M1: Mmm hmm.

Q: I hated peanut butter and jelly!

M1: Peanut butter and jelly sandwiches.

Q: Anything that -- (phone rings) or --

M1: [Bakit?].

Q: -- tea and --

A: [Oh, that's right?]. I know.

Q: I think that's your phone.

A: Is that your phone or mine?

Q: No, I think that's yours. Mine's off.

A: It's right here.

Q: OK.

(break in audio)

Q: All right. So you fasted all week and you received communion on Holy Saturday?

A: Yeah.

Q: Did you go in the evening t--? Did you stay for the liturgy?

A: No, it was always in the morning.

Q: The morning, right.

A: [Yeah?]. Yeah.

Q: And what did you do? Did you go --? How many times did you go to church during Holy Week? Every night? Friday, Saturday?

A: I don't remember.

Q: All right.

A: I really don't.

Q: Yeah.

A: I'd be lying if --

Q: No! How did your family celebrate the [Anosthese?], what preparation?

A: Well, they had eggs and -- we always spent it with the Adams' and they had a cookout and the whole big -- I never

thought about pictures like that but I have lots of pictures.

Q: You do? Very important, Katherine! How ma--? How long have we been talking to you?

A: (laughs)

M1: You always say that to her.

Q: OK, Katherine.

A: OK.

Q: So you would go to -- would be --

A: Before you go home we'll go upstairs and you can look through.

Q: All right. The --

A: Oh, maybe I have them -- no, I don't.

Q: Well, let's look at those after. Let me just finish --

A: Yeah.

Q: -- with the questions. So you would go the A-- when did they celebrate? Easter Sunday or Saturday night, after --?

A: Easter Sunday.

Q: What did you do Saturday night, after church? Did your mother do anything special?

A: She always had -- is it a [maiaditsa]??



M1: [Maiaditsa?].

Q: Yeah, maiaditsa, right, the --

M1: We --

Q: Yeah, exactly.

A: And maybe we went someplace. Somebody may have invited us or we had somebody over. But I remember the maiaditsa.

Q: Right. All right? Do you remember how the church celebrated its name day, like St. Nicholas Day?

A: No.

Q: You don't remember. The 25th of March, any celebrations that you might remember?

A: No, not -- no. If we did, I don't remember.

Q: All right. That's it for -- but I want to go back to the business. So tell me -- think of some things about Bamberger's and your --

A: Well, look--

Q: -- experiences.

A: And looking at some of this might bring --

Q: Memories.

A: That used to be one of my bosses. This goes back a long way. He used to be my boss. I must have been the buyer of

something there. (laughs)

Q: Where were you? Are you in this picture?

A: Yeah. This is me.

Q: That's you, Katherine!

A: Yeah.

M1: Wow.

Q: It looks like plants, Katherine.

A: Yeah, it must have been the plant department.

Q: You were in that too? So you really went from --

A: Oh, I went -- yeah. I was [part of?] clocks and gifts and an assistant in glassware and china, and then foods.

M1: What year is this, Katherine? Do you remember which year?

A: It must be, no, about 1940.

Q: Yeah, [I think?].

M1: '40s. Yeah, interesting. [And you look so?] --

A: And that's at a picnic, a Bamberger picnic. And those are all different like that.

Q: And where did they have the picnic?

A: Now you're asking. I haven't the slightest --

Q: (laughs) Do you remember?

A: -- idea. Where am I here? I'm here someplace. Yeah,

there. And these are all vice presidents. (laughs) And that's the same picnic. And here we are in a car. That's me. These are other buyers.

Q: Were you allowed to date anybody who wasn't Greek?

A: No.

Q: Oh, for heaven's sakes.

A: But I did but --

(laughter)

M1: Nobody knew it!

Q: Good for you, Katherine.

A: [Yeah?]. These are all people -- [now my?] -- this is the lady -- I loved her -- that I went to Europe with most of the time. And I learned an awful lot from her. She was the Macy buyer. And I was the Bamberger buyer.

Q: Ah!

A: But she had been to Europe many, many times before. So she had a vast knowledge of it. So I really learned a lot from her. Yeah, there I am. And these are vendors. And there's she. I don't know who she is. Oh, and these, this is in the show, you know.

Q: Do you know where?

A: It has to be in New York someplace. I don't recognize it.

Q: This is -- next time, at your table, I hope, Don.

(laughter)

A: Yeah.

Q: It was g--

A: The General Electric vice president. (laughter) Oh, I went on a cruise with General Electric, at one time.

Q: Oh! OK.

A: And I had a real good time.

Q: OK, Katherine.

A: Yeah.

Q: I like to hear those things.

A: Oh, yeah. And this is --

Q: And china, glass, decorative accessories, huh?

A: Yeah. This was at the Gift and Art Club party, in California. And I'm always first -- listed first, Kay Pantages of Bamberger.

Q: These are terrific!

A: Yeah. And then I don't know what this is.

Q: Bull in the China Shop?

M1: And Bull in the China Shop.

A: Yeah.

Q: OK, wait a minute. Let me find your name.

A: Something. Or otherwise I wouldn't have kept it. Oh, here.

Q: OK. Mailed from --

A: Oh, I must have --

Q: And Kay Pantages.

A: -- must have sent a note to them.

Q: They wrote to say they, "changed their plans about sailing, boarding the Queen Mary instead of the Mauritania. By now, both should be back in their office."

A: [Big deal?].

M1: (laughs)

A: And then here we are at some dinner. I know that's me.

Q: Mmm hmm. The gift and art buyer for b--

A: Yeah.

Q: This is in 1952.

A: At a luncheon at the Prince George Hotel.

Q: In New York, huh?

A: Yeah. You know, I haven't looked at this in years.

Q: Bringing back memories?

A: Oh, it sure does. Oh, this is on board ship. (laughs)

Q: Mm. I notice how beautifully you were dressed.

A: Oh, well, we all dressed --

Q: Everyone did.

M1: And it's very, very --

Q: You know? We look at old pictures like *North by Northwest*, with Cary Grant, and at the train station every woman is wearing --

A: Gloves and hat. Mm.

Q: -- a suit, glove, pocketbook, hat.

A: Well, this is --

Q: The men are in ties and shirts.

A: Everyone dressed like that.

Q: I know. It was wonderful.

M1: They were very (inaudible).

A: Oh, this was a Bamberger newspaper. I don't know why -- I'm -- I did win a prize. And I think I wasn't there. But this is when they gave it out. Yeah, because it mentions that someone is not there. But I'm --

Q: Let me see if I can find where it says.

A: I think that's the -- oh, this is when I got the prize. I have to show [it there?].

Q: Here it says. OK. "-- won a gold medal," and so forth.

-- and Katherine Pantages, Department Manager of Decorative Gift Accessories, who received a gold medal and trophy award certificate in Class B for exclusive importation of wooden nativity sets."

M1: Mmm hmm.

A: Oh, yeah. You know, that was an interesting thing.

M1: Christmastime.

A: Now I must say that Valerie, you know, my friend, was the beginning. But we decided we should buy a nativity set. So we bought the stable in Germany and then the figurines in Italy. But there were too many. So we cut it down. You know, we only kept the Holy Family and three wise men and one sheep, so it would be affordable. And when we came -- you know, so it was a big carton for the stable and then another carton, was a mass -- a big amount of space it required. So I used the whole 13th floor of Bamberger's.

Q: Really?

A: They had to take it over. So my boss called me and he said to me, "Katherine, what did you bring?"

Q: (laughs)

A: So I said, "Oh, I think the nativity set." He said, "Well, they called me." He said, "We're taking up all the space."

I said, "Well --" He said, "How many did you buy?" You know, I looked at him. And he was Jewish.

M1: (laughs)

Q: I know! I know, Katherine!

M1: He was Jewish.

A: And I said, "Well, 5,000."

(laughter)

Q: Katherine!

A: He almost had a heart attack.

Q: Oh, Katherine! But at that time there was (inaudible).

A: You know, the thing is, when you repeat and say it, you say to yourself, "What am I doing? What did I do?" So he said, "Isn't that a lot?" I said, "Oh, I think I'll sell them." You know, I was very confident. "Well," he said, "we'd better put them on sale." Now I had marked them at 7.99. I think I paid \$2 for them.

Q: Oh, my God, Katherine!

A: But -- yeah. I really had a lot of guts, I must say --

M1: [That's?] --

A: -- in retrospect. So he said, "No. We should run a special on them, and run an ad and sell them for 5.99." I said,



"Well, I don't know." We ran the ad. We hardly sold any.  
I sold out at 7.99.

Q: See? That's right.

M1: They were too cheap. They were too cheap for --

A: They were too cheap to give as a gift.

M1: That's what happens a lot --

A: So -- but I'll never forget that.

M1: And you sold out, 5,000.

A: We sold out --

M1: Sold out.

A: -- 5,000.

Q: [They did it?].

A: But, you know, when he took me up there and I saw the stuff  
--

Q: (laughs)

A: -- oh, my God! You know? 5,000 big boxes.

Q: Yes!

A: But anyway, we did very well. (laughs)

M1: That's --

Q: Rare gift. That's lovely.

A: Yeah.

M1: And so --

Q: International bazaar?

A: Yeah, and I think it says something.

Q: Oh, "Miss Pantages declares --" Wait a minute. "'There are no modern conveniences of any sort (laughter) in these plants,' Miss Pantages declares, 'Toilet facilities are primitive and there is no heating.'" Oh, you're talking about --

A: Yeah. Where I went.

Q: "Miss -- points out is that factories are set up --" Yeah. Wonderful!

A: Yeah. I have a lot of -- you know, evidently they quoted me a lot.

Q: Oh, they have -- this whole article is about you!

A: Yeah.

Q: And it's *The Star Ledger*, November 8th, 1954. "'In all of Europe --'" OK -- "'there is no more interesting country, from the point of view of a shopper, than Italy.' This is the opinion of Katherine Pantages, giftware buyer for L. Bamberger and Co."

M1: We've got to make copies of this, and give it to Charles.

Q: Oh, yeah.

M1: Charles'd love this! He can do [a?] --

Q: I know, I know.

M1: -- Christmastime and everything else.

Q: But this is good, because --

M1: This --

Q: -- it shows --

A: Yeah.

Q: Importers and imported. And there you are again.

A: Oh, I'm in a lot. I didn't realize it. You know, I had put it all in here b--

Q: This is May 27th, 1956.

A: No one looks --

Q: Katherine --

A: -- at these things.

Q: -- I'm going to ask you a question.

A: What?

Q: Can we take some of this with us, to --?

A: Yeah, if you give it back to me.

Q: Oh, absolutely. But the photograph --

M1: They can make copies -- make copies.

Q: You know, they'll make copies of relevant things.

A: Yeah.

(break in audio)

A: I guess I kept it for that --

Q: OK.

A: -- [my life or?] --

Q: And there's another one. Is it the same one? The 25 Year club banquet. That's what this is.

A: Oh, yeah, that.

Q: OK.

A: I'm in that picture, yes. You know, people worked for a long time at the same --

Q: Oh, yes!

M1: Oh, yeah, yeah.

Q: And if Hanes hadn't, you know, been taken over, if they -- you know, the take-- what do they call it? I forgot? Demi would still be there. (laughs)

A: Yeah? Now where is this? I don't know. It's at someplace.

Q: Yeah. Probably at one of --

A: That's the vice president --

Q: Maybe it was a banquet.

A: -- my friend. Oh, an annual dinner dance. Oh, yeah, the 25 Year Club. Yeah. And this -- oh, you know what these are, I think? Oh, there were letters. That's the chairman of the board of Macy's. What is his name?

Q: He's saying he -- you'll, "celebrate your 25th anniversary with the corporation, having spent more -- I know exactly what this means to you. -- grateful to you and I congratulate -- I hope you will enjoy many more years of happy, (inaudible) association with this great organization."

M1: There were stores [here?] -- Atlanta, Springfield --

Q: Yeah.

M1: -- Menlo Park, (inaudible).

A: Yeah, when I finished we had 21.

M1: Wow!

A: This is [from?] my friend. (laughs)

Q: That's very nice.

M1: [You?] --

Q: Katherine, these are --

(break in audio)

A: And I'm not sure.

(laughter)

Q: He didn't make a pass at you, Katherine?

A: No, he was very friendly. But he had -- he invited me to his home for dinner. And I sat next to a prince.

M1: Is that right?

Q: Kather-- did you have that on or not?

M1: Yeah.

A: Oh, I hope --

(break in audio)

Q: --[burk?] Airport.

A: Yeah, see?

M1: Hm!

Q: Houston.

A: Oh, that's the cruise I went on.

Q: Now why did you go on that cruise, for pleasure?

A: I won something.

Q: Oh, you won something from Bamberger's.

A: Yeah. No, from General Electric.

Q: Why?

A: I sold so many clocks or --

Q: Ah!

A: -- or, you know, I bought so many clocks.

Q: OK. Is it on?

M1: Yeah.

Q: Good. OK.

A: No, wait, this is -- so I don't think -- no, this is just a daily program. Yeah, this was a store -- look who that is, Constance Cummings.

Q: Oh, the actress!

M1: The actress.

A: Actress, yeah.

M1: Yeah.

Q: OK.

M1: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Q: Terrific!

A: And he was a store manager --

Q: Terrific.

A: -- [at?] that time. What's this?

Q: "For your portfolio. To market, to market." (laughs)

A: Oh, I guess somebody sent me something.

Q: And this is to -- [that's?] Nicky.

A: Oh, from my mother. Yeah, Nicklaus.

Q: Oh! The golf pro.

A: Yeah.

M1: See, he's a golfer, yes.

Q: Yeah. And Houston [Foods?].

A: Oh, yeah. He was an important resource. (laughs) The owner was really a riot. He would write the most impossible thing.

(laughter)

M1: [How did he get to?] (inaudible)?

Q: You need that.

A: Yeah.

Q: You need that. This is good. This is the kind of lift you need, Kay. (laughs)

A: But I'm not letting you take everything.

Q: Why?

A: Because. Now that you can have.

(laughter)

Q: What a minute, Kay! You don't want these?

A: Yeah. I don't want you to take them.

Q: You don't want me to take the one with Constance Cummings?



A: No, you can have that one.

Q: And with Jack Nicklaus?

A: No, I don't think you want that. Do you?

Q: Well, no, not really. OK. And you don't want us to take this.

M1: [Well, so the origin?].

A: Yeah, I don't think you should take too many --

Q: OK. All right.

A: -- with the --

Q: All right.

A: -- name of the foods.

Q: All right. How about this? This shows you were at the show.

A: Yeah, that's OK.

Q: That's OK? OK.

A: (laughs) He's so funny. Every year he sent me pictures. Now, they go in the envelopes.

Q: Yeah. All right. Tell us what we can take and --

A: You can't have that.

(laughter)

Q: Let me see that, Kay. Good for you. Geor-- Peter, take

this. Here. I won't -- oh, this is attached, but that's OK. At the food show. And your mother saw this?

A: Oh, yeah.

(laughter)

Q: "We've got to stop meeting like this." OK, you're right, the Houston -- right. "Cashing [in?] foods."

A: They go in --

Q: OK.

A: -- that envelope that they were in --

Q: Right, the e--

A: -- because the --

Q: Where's the envelope?

A: I don't know.

M1: I think it's --

Q: It's here.

M1: -- in the bottom somewheres.

Q: Well, I've go-- no, it's right here, Kay, right here.

M1: It's right here.

A: Oh, OK.

Q: Do you want [these?]? They're all --

A: I don't think we should [retire them?] --

Q: All right. OK.

A: -- the food.

Q: All right.

A: But see, they would send me these.

Q: This is all Houston. Right.

A: Yeah. Ah.

M1: Hm?

Q: These are nice memories. You know?

M1: Sure!

Q: Yeah.

M1: Oh, yeah! Those are beautiful.

A: I worked hard.

Q: I know. I know.

M1: How many total years did you work there? Total.

A: From '39 --

Q: '39 to '85.

M1: To '85. OK.

A: Forty-six years or something?

M1: Yeah, 46. I just wanted to make sure, you know -- not too many people work that many years in any company. I mean --

A: No.

Q: At that time --

A: They used to.

M1: Yeah, at that time.

A: That's the way you worked.

M1: Yeah, [taking care of?] business.

Q: Well, you hold onto this.

M1: Even our business, you know --

Q: Yeah. At that time, they used to.

M1: Now --

A: Wait. You know, there are some things here I don't want you to have.

Q: All right.

A: Now this one was I was getting promoted from Department Manager of Glassware to --

Q: Of Decorative --?

A: -- Department Manager of Decorative Gifts. She just called me. That's who called me.

Q: Oh, how nice!

M1: Oh, you keep in touch. That's nice. [With these?] --

A: Yeah. [So I?] -- and that's me.

Q: Now, these are good. This is important.

A: Yeah, this you can have. Yeah, I don't think you should have these.

M1: OK.

Q: OK.

A: (laughs)

M1: No, that's good. We'll take --

Q: We're just going to take, you -- OK --

M1: Yeah --

Q: -- the things, you know, that are important.

M1: The articles, the newspaper clippings, yes.

Q: Yeah.

A: Oh, this is -- I know you'll -- when Bamberger's would run a thing -- here I am.

Q: Oh, marvelous!

A: (laughs)

M1: That's good.

Q: This is wonderful!

A: Yeah.

M1: The sales.

A: Is there anything else --?

Q: There's one other thing here, Katherine, this.

M1: An article.

A: Yeah, what is it?

Q: [Stapled?] together. "Even Patricia says that she --"

A: Oh, she used to be my assistant, [at the?] -- no, this doesn't have anything to do with me.

Q: All right.

(break in audio)

A: I modeled shoes.

M1: Oh!

Q: Oh, for heaven's sake!

M1: Is that right? That's interesting.

Q: Katherine, that's definitely -- that's fantastic!

A: These are me. (laughs)

Q: That's fantastic!

M1: Who --?

Q: Now wait a minute. You took a course. I'm going to see if I can find you, Katherine.

A: You think that was me?

Q: No, that's not you.

A: No.

Q: But you said you took a course.

A: Yeah, a merchandising course. Oh, this is the --

(break in audio)

A: And you don't want that.

(break in audio)

A: --[where?].

Q: (laughs)

A: I did something. I'm here and it lists me. I don't know what it is. See? "You have successfully completed the 1943 course in basic merchandising."

Q: OK, that's good. And this, Katherine --

A: My --

Q: -- you were Santa and good mor-- wait a minute. "Joe [Oseli?]- and his pretty sign shop gals got out thousands Christmas toppers for our signs right on schedule. Mrs. Pantages, Jake, and," [so?], "are getting their toppers from sign shoppers," so on and so forth.

A: Oh, yeah. OK, these are all --

(break in audio)

A: "Jim, head of Stock and Records and Record Accessories. And in Radios and Radio Accessories --"

Q: This is the history of your work.

A: When was this?

Q: Ninetee-- now does it say back here?

A: No, not the --

Q: No.

A: '44.

Q: 1944. Here, Katherine, put that in there, because we're going to take that too.

A: Don't lose any of these.

Q: No. I'll guard them with my life.

A: Oh, this was the president of Bamberger's, Mr. Williams --

M1: OK.

A: -- telling he's happy to learn -- he was so funny. He was a wolf in sheep's clothing.

(laughter)

Q: But good for the ego, right?

M1: [Right?].

A: Like if you were on a ladder and he walked by --

M1: He'd look at --

(laughter)

Q: And you didn't wear slacks in those days, right?



(laughter)

A: And I couldn't stand him. Oh, I have two. Oh, he sent me two the same.

Q: That's '44 and '45.

A: Yeah. But you're going to lose some of these.

Q: No, Katherine.

M1: No, no. She's good in keeping things --

Q: No, Katherine --

M1: -- keeping --

Q: -- I will not lose them.

A: Now who's this? Maybe on the other side.

Q: "Joseph [Carey?] has been named --" Wait a minute.

(break in audio)

A: -- shoppi--

(break in audio)

A: "-- visitors attending the 37th semiannual gift show at the Hotel New Yorker." Yeah. Unh huh. And these are the different people there. And this is [Saulie?], here. And --

Q: And you're there --

A: Oh, yeah.

Q: -- because it says Katherine Pantages.

A: Yeah. Where am I?

Q: I don't know.

A: Oh, here.

Q: They --

(break in audio)

A: You know, I haven't looked at this in years.

Q: Well, you look at it and --

A: Yeah. And what's this? I got a certificate for something -- for a tumbler set. Oh, I got two! I got a special award and a -- oh!

Q: (laughs)

A: Gee.

M1: So many awards! You had a beautiful career.

Q: Yeah.

M1: You look at all of this information in here.

A: Oh, I did have a good career.

Q: Yes.

A: It was not only -- it was very satisfying and I really enjoyed it. It was wonderful.

M1: Traveling, meeting people --

A: Yes.

M1: -- like you're saying.

A: And even when I was working here, I was in New York. I met very interesting people. Because many people are interested in art and things, who do other things. And, you know, so you meet them. Oh, now this was my friend. And he got married to Laura [Atlee's?] daughter. And I went to his reception.

Q: Oh, how nice!

M1: OK.

A: I happened to be in England at the time he was getting married, so I went. He was a riot. He would wear a bowler hat when we'd go to the market. I'd say to him, "Get rid of that hat!"

(laughter)

Q: But he was a buyer for Bam--? What was he?

A: No, he worked in the Macy office in London. Oh, these are friends of mine.

(break in audio)

A: Oh, there I am, back there, with all the men.

Q: That's the way to go, Katherine.

A: (laughs)

M1: Mmm hmm.

Q: That's the way to go, Katherine.

A: OK, let's see.

(break in audio)

A: "--tation to you to be our guest at the awards dinner and presentation at the Waldorf Astoria." I guess I got something there.

Q: (laughs)

A: This is a letter to the president of -- [Eunisch?] -- of Bamberger's. "-- confirming award merit in the gifts and art buyer annual awards." Oh, so, "The first public announcement that your store is an award winner is being made in the April --" And so what did I keep it for?

Q: (laughs)

M1: What year is that, Katherine?

A: '58. See, I guess I got an award too, because they wouldn't send me a [gift?] --

Q: Yeah, and, not only that, it says, "Sincerely yours, the gift and art buyer."

A: Yeah, so I did.

(break in audio)

A: That's what these are.

Q: Oh, that's nice, I mean, that people were interested in you.

A: Yeah.

M1: Oh, you built up a reputation. That's why.

A: Oh, I did.

M1: Yeah!

A: I mean, you know, honestly, I can tell you.

Q: But [it's not?] -- Demi told me, "Katherine Pantages has the biggest reputation --"

M1: See --

Q: "-- as the candy buyer, throughout the United States."

A: Yeah, I did have a pretty good pretty good --

M1: All these awards she's won and everything else --

A: Yeah.

M1: -- accolades. Beautiful!

A: What is this?

M1: Beautiful.

A: Oh, he kept always offering me -- (laughs) But, you know, for my ego, that's a good letter.

M1: Charles definitely has to interview her and get those --

(break in audio)

M1: Today is June 29th. We'll be interviewing Katherine Pantages. Testing.

(break in audio)

A: OK.

Q: OK. Katherine, tell me where your fa-- these are the same questions we asked.

A: Yeah, the --

Q: But that's OK.

A: I understand.

Q: Where did your family come from in Greece?

A: Pelloponisos. My father came from [Doliana?], where -- it evidently is at the top of a mountain. And they had a summer house and a winter house. In the summer they lived at the top and in the winter at the bottom. And my mother was from Kerasita, which is in the [Pelloponiso?].

Q: What was --? How do you spell that?

A: K-E-R-A-- Kera-- --S-I-- Kerasita.

Q: There's a T in there, isn't there --

A: Yeah.

Q: -- Keras-- OK.

A: Yeah. It's the main road between Tripoli and Sparti,

unquote.

M1: OK.

Q: Main road betw-- well, it's going to be on there but --

A: Yeah.

Q: She was a Massos, right --

A: Yes.

Q: -- your mother? OK.

A: Yes. And that's what this man is coming -- his mother is related to my uncle, who brought my mother here. And it's interesting. Yeah, I found -- you know, I went looking for old things.

M1: That's -- I just want --

A: But look through anything.

M1: OK.

Q: OK. When did they arrive in the United States? Do you know the year that your father arrived and the year that your mother arrived?

A: Yeah. Can you wait a minute?

Q: Sure.

A: I'll go get exact --

Q: OK, that w--

(break in audio)

A: -- father immigrated in 1903.

Q: Father in 1903. Right.

A: And he was naturalized in January 1913. And my mother integrated in 1910.

Q: That's the year my mother was born. (laughter) She was born in Lou--

(break in audio)

Q: Go ahead. And she just -- when was she naturalized or --?

A: Well, when she got married, I guess.

Q: Right.

A: I don't know.

Q: OK.

A: Yeah, I'm glad I have this. I don't know what made me do it one day. I had to have that.

Q: Well, good. That's wonderful.

A: Yeah, otherwise you don't remember.

Q: All right. Well, you were born here, right?

A: Oh, yes, in Plainfield. And so was my brother.

(break in audio)

A: Well, you'd be interested. Look at all the subject I took



after I retired.

M1: Wow! [And some?] --

(break in audio)

Q: Original point of entry into the United States.

A: (laughs) Oh, you will laugh. My mother was brought by my uncle. He had been here and became fairly successful. And then he took a trip to Greece and he brought my mother back and another uncle. Well, I'd say to my mother, "Did you come through Ellis Island?" and she'd say, "No, Casti Gati." And I thought, "Where the hell is Casti Gati?" Castle Garden.

M1: Oh.

Q: Oh! Castle Garden, Long Island?

A: I guess.

Q: Castle Garden would be in Long Island.

A: Because I never knew --

Q: Maybe --

A: But --

Q: Maybe she came into New York port and then he took her to Castle Garden.

A: Yeah. Who knows? Because he was a citizen at that point

and he could r--

Q: Right. But --

A: But she kept saying, "Casti Gati," --

M1: Casti Gati?

A: -- and I kept saying, "I never heard of such a place." I only figured it out a few years ago.

(laughter)

Q: And your father?

A: I have no idea. I guess he came through Ellis Island. I don't know. And when he came, evidently somebody from his village was here and that's where he --

Q: And went -- all right. That's how they all did it. So --

A: Yes. Yeah.

Q: You know, village compatriots helped each other. When did they settle in Newark?

A: Oh, about 1933.

Q: All right. And where did they live in Newark?

A: On --

Q: I don't know why I'm writing.

A: Yeah, first we lived in High Street. We stayed there a long time. You know, it was a nice apartment house. And --

Q: High Street is beautiful.

A: It was nice then. But many, many, many years later somebody was taking me home from work and I said, "Let's go over High Street. I haven't been by there." I said, "And we used to live there." He said, "In that tenement?" (laughs)

Q: Well, it --

A: That's how it changed.

M1: [That's?] --

Q: Of course!

A: Yeah. But it was --

Q: Of course.

A: -- High Street. And that's when we started going to church a lot.

M1: [Very?] beautiful houses, that time --

A: Yeah, at that time.

M1: -- beautiful old houses.

A: Yes. This was a nice apartment house.

Q: Do you remember the address of the apartment house? Doesn't matter.

A: No, it was on the corner of High and Spruce, wherever that is.

Q: OK. Did you attend school in Newark?

A: No, never.

Q: Oh. OK. Did you belong to any Greek or American organizations?

A: I didn't belong to any Greek organizations. In Newark, no, I wouldn't -- not that I --

Q: Like [Aheba?], like The Daughters of Penelope --

A: Yeah, I --

Q: -- like the Mega--

A: Yeah.

Q: No.

A: No.

Q: How about American organizations?

A: Well, whatever -- I was -- my alumni association -- school -- and then I belonged to --

Q: What was your school?

A: North Plainfield.

Q: And any other organization?

A: Not really. I wasn't a joiner, more or less, you know. But I had lots of friends and --

Q: All right. You belonged to St. Nicholas, right?

A: Yes.

Q: Did your family have a business in Newark?

A: No.

Q: What type of work did your father do?

A: He had a wholesale fruit and vegetable business.

Q: And where was that?

A: In Plainfield.

Q: When did you move to Plainfield?

A: Oh, I was born there. I don't know.

Q: Oh, you were born in Plainfield.

A: Yes.

Q: And then you came to Newark.

A: Yes.

Q: Oh, all right.

A: See, we lived in Plainfield for many, many years. There was a period of two or three years when my father sold his business in Plainfield and we went to Elizabeth, so we could go to Greek school --

Q: Mmm hmm. Oh --

A: -- which I thought was ridiculous. But anyway. (laughter)  
And then after -- I don't remember -- was it 2-1/2 or three

years? -- we went back to Plainfield.

Q: (laughs)

A: He sold that business and bought another bus-- but he said we had to learn Greek.

M1: Greek.

A: And I fought it every inch of the way.

(laughter)

Q: And then you moved to Newark, after --

A: Yeah.

Q: Plainfield, Elizabeth, Plainfield --

A: Plainfield --

Q: -- and then Newark.

A: -- and Newark.

Q: All right. So he had the business in Plainfield. He sold it and then opened the business in Elizabeth?

A: Yes.

Q: All right. And then why did --? And then he sold the business in Elizabeth and moved back to Plainfield? Did he open another business in Plainfield?

A: Yeah, he had a small store, at that point.

Q: All right.

A: I don't remember it too well. But that's where it was.

Q: And then you went to Newark. But he didn't have any business in Newark.

A: No, he had retired.

Q: OK. When did --? OK. Did he work at any time for any Greek-Americans, in business?

A: No.

Q: Did he hire any Greek-Americans to work for him? You don't know.

A: Didn't pay any attention.

Q: Can you give me some background about your family life in Newark? What was it like living in Newark, on High Street?

A: Oh, well, for us it was very nice. Number one, in Plainfield there weren't many Greek people. So we only went to church two or three times a year. So in Newark we became acquainted with a lot of people. You know, I must have belonged to clubs but I don't remember it. But we became very friendly with a lot of -- and my parents knew a lot of people that were there. And Father [Spivakes?] and his wife and all, we were very friendly with them. And then my mother and father knew a lot of people, the Adams' and the [Arjuri's?] and -- they had a good social circle. So it was

interesting. We attended the dances and whatever event they had in church. It was -- and I had a lot of friends. And my mother had -- we had a lot of company. And it was interesting, different from Plainfield. Plainfield, we had only non-Greek --

M1: And the --

A: -- friends, you know, some of which I still have. Isn't that interesting?

Q: Well, that's marvelous.

A: Yeah.

Q: That's marvelous.

A: But we didn't have -- there weren't that many Greek people -- there were a few families. The [Cher?]- what was her name? (laughs) Isn't that awful.

Q: It'll come back to you later.

A: Yeah.

M1: [Yeah?], we'll come back.

A: I get a name that isn't right. Not [Chergotis?]. Ch-- well, anyway, they owned the res-- the hotel, and I knew the daughters very well. And there were -- I can remember about four or five families. You know who else was there? The [Ganifis'?].



M1: Ganifis.

A: That was one family. And I see --

M1: Ganifis, yeah.

A: -- them in church now. Yeah.

M1: Ganifis.

A: And so it was a different world, for us, in Newark. We --

Q: When did you start working?

A: In '38.

Q: Before that, before you started working, did you go to any school?

A: No, I didn't go to college. It was either my brother or me.

Q: Yeah. All right.

A: And I know Greek families. He went. (laughs)

Q: See, my mother was different.

A: Yeah.

Q: She felt --

A: Girls should go.

Q: Very important.

A: Well, I guess maybe they couldn't afford it.

Q: Right.

A: Who knows?

Q: Well, no.

A: You know.

Q: You know, that was a different era.

A: But anyway, and I guess I didn't want to go that badly.

(laughs)

Q: So you --

A: I was going to the movies with my mother, the matinee. And on the way I said to her, "You know what? I think I'll go into Bamberger's and see if I can get a job." And I lied. I told them I had experience in selling hats.

Q: (laughs)

A: Because I figured --

M1: [It's?] --

A: -- Easter is coming. Women all wear hats.

M1: [And smart?].

A: So they have to have more help. So I said I had experience. And you know what my experience was?

Q: Wearing them?

A: Next door to my father's store in Plainfield was a millinery store. And I must have been about six or seven years old.

And the lady was very nice and she let me take the hats out of the [boxes?].

(laughter)

M1: That's cute.

Q: I love that!

A: So that's my experience.

M1: Experience.

Q: I love that.

A: But I told them, yes, I had had experience in millinery.

Q: I love that. Go --

A: So I got a job selling. And then they kept me on. And then I kept getting promoted. And that's how I [started?].

Q: Well -- OK, now wait a minute. You kept getting promoted. Now, let's talk about that. You went from selling hats to --

A: Yeah.

Q: -- what promotion?

A: Well, then I was selling in the record department. And then I --

Q: They had a record department in Bamberger?

A: Oh, a big record department.

Q: Oh! OK.

A: Yeah, music and records. And then I became what they called a squad head, which is the bottom level of executives, you know, really. They prom-- no, no. That wasn't it. You know the people that wore the white flowers?

Q: Mmm hmm.

A: Used to call them the floor walkers. They promoted me to that. And then I became a squad head. And then I became an assistant in records. And I stayed there a couple of years, and became very knowledgeable about music.

(laughter)

Q: Marvelous!

A: Yeah. And then I was -- where did I go? From there I went to the -- I was an assistant in the gift department -- no, in the china department. And then I stayed there. And eventually I became a buyer, and gifts. And I stayed about 12 years. And I -- no, more, from 1950 until about '65, about 15 years. And I had 15 trips to Europe in that period.

Q: And where did you go in Europe?

A: Oh, you were -- don't want to hear.

M1: Mmm hmm.

Q: Yes, I do. Because I know from Demi too. Go ahead.

A: I went to -- we would arrive in either England or France.  
Italy, Germany, Belgium, Sweden, Denmark, Portugal, Spain.

M1: Wow!

A: Did I say Italy?

Q: Mmm hmm.

A: Yeah. But those -- what we did every year. Some years we would add another country, like -- oh, I said -- Norway, Sweden.

Q: Did you ever go to Greece?

A: No.

Q: Not on a buying trip. Never.

A: I had been to Greece for a weekend. While I was working in Italy, I took a weekend off and flew to Greece and stayed Friday, Saturday, and Sunday and came back. That's the only time I've been to Greece.

Q: That's the only time, in your entire life?

A: By the time I got home from one of those trips --

Q: I know.

A: -- I didn't want to go anywhere.

Q: You were exhausted. No, I understand that.

M1: How long did you stay, each trip, like two weeks or --?

A: Well, at the beginning it was eight weeks.

M1: Eight -- wow!

A: Because I used to go by ship --

M1: Oh, I see.

A: -- you know, the Queen Mary or the Queen Elizabeth.

Q: Ah! OK. This is something I didn't know.

A: Yeah.

Q: Go ahead.

A: And then, after when we flew, I'd stay about six weeks.

Most of the time I spent in Italy, because that was the most productive place. And then I did a lot of traveling, to all the countries. But normally a c-- I have some of the --

Q: Itin--

A: -- my, you know, lists of places.

M1: Where'd you go to Italy, like Florence or -- most of --?

A: Oh, we would arrive in Milan, mostly, and do the northern part and then --

Q: You went to the shows that they had. Did you go to the shows you had there or just to the different --?

A: If a show was on, we went. But we stayed there. Because we

had buying offices in those countries.

M1: Oh, I see.

A: And they would have everything planned for us.

Q: So they would meet you --?

A: One year I went alone. And they met you and they took care of you. All your reservations were made. Everything was made.

M1: That's good.

A: Then they put you on a plane and sent you to the next place. And then that office would pick you up. And it was really -- I'm s-- (laughs) In retrospect -- I used to say, "Do I have to go back again?" When I think of how I had a car and chauffeur, first class --

Q: Of course!

A: But best of everything. And I used to say, "Gee whiz --"

M1: [You get?] --

A: "-- do I have to go?"

Q: But it's a lot of work, Katherine --

A: Oh, yeah. I did --

Q: -- a lot of work!

M1: Yeah.

Q: Because you're up from early --

A: Oh, yeah.

Q: -- and you're meeting everybody.

A: And weekends, we traveled. But I did manage to do some sightseeing. And I really have some interesting -- well, you said Rome and all. I had been in Rome about four times. I never got to the Vatican. Because I had appointments and I couldn't make it. So this one time, I said, "I'm going. I mean, it's a sin to be here --"

M1: Yeah, not to go.

A: "-- and not go." So they said, "Fine." So we went. And it was a little late. And there was a changing of the guard at the point -- and the fellow I was with said to them, "Gee, this lady has been here so many times and she's never been able --" "Oh," he said, "I'm going off. I'll come back and I'll take you." I had a personal tour --

M1: Oh, a --

A: -- by myself in the Sistine Chapel.

Q: How marvelous.

M1: Beautiful!

A: I saw the whole thing.

M1: Wow!



A: It was wonderful. But, I mean, that's how busy you were.  
You did see things but, you know --

Q: You know, and you're with your group at night --

M1: Yeah.

Q: -- and with the buyers and everything else --

A: Yeah. Yeah.

Q: -- and you just --

A: And there were -- and also, there weren't many women buyers, at that point. I would be the only woman, with a bunch of men. And even on the ships -- I always sat at the captain's table, (laughs) because I don't think there were any other women!

M1: (laughs)

Q: That's terrific!

M1: Terrific!

Q: Come on, tell us some more of your [social -- and?] --

M1: This is [inter?]- experience.

A: But you know what? You forget a lot of things. I remember I had written my mother some letters and she had kept them. And I was reading. And in it I mention who I had dinner with. I had totally forgotten. And I was so impressed --

Q: (laughs)

A: -- looking at -- I thought, "Wow!"

M1: (laughs)

A: "Did I go --? Was I there?" (laughs)

Q: Do you have those letters?

A: I think someplace.

Q: Well, I think you should make copies then. We could use those.

A: Oh, really?

Q: We could add those. Yes, this is all --

A: Oh, OK. But anyway, it was -- but as I say, in retrospect, I think how stupid I was. "Do I have to go again?" I wish I could be going on one now!

(laughter)

M1: Looking back.

Q: And after you were a gift buyer, what happened then?

A: Oh, yeah. So I became a --

Q: We-- and ho--?

A: Then they wanted to do the food world with fashion. That was -- because I said, "Food? I don't know anything about food." And they said, "Well, what we want you to do is to

add fashion to it. We don't want just a food department. We'll have people that'll take care of the basics but we want --" So at the end I was the candy and food buyer. And I want to tell you, I did a tremendous business. I couldn't get over it. During Valentine's and -- well, you'll read some of the things. I would do more in volume than the other big departments, that I could -- half a floor. I would buy jelly beans by the carload. And then I found a machine that packed them. So we would buy -- I would really buy a carload, like 40,000 pounds or some ridiculous figure. When I think about it, I'm impressed, myself.

(laughter)

M1: This'll be great for Charles Cummings, to put a story --

Q: Shh, shh, shh.

M1: Oh -- [oh?], terrific!

Q: Go ahead, Katherine.

M1: Go ahead.

Q: Go ahead, Katherine.

M1: And we'll --

A: So we had a machine that packaged -- I had totally forgotten about it. But I met somebody one day and she said, "Gee, that was some department you had. How about that machine

you had upstairs?" I said, "What machine?" She said, "That you used to pack --" "Oh, yeah," I said, "That was wonderful." Because instead of people just sitting and packing, they had this -- it just was wonderful. I don't know how I found it. I don't remember now. But -- and then we did a big, big business in foods. But it was not -- it was mostly candy. Like I did a million dollars in Russell Stover, almost. And then when we put Godiva, and we did almost as much. We did a lot of business.

Q: It was the packaging? Did you think up the packaging? Or did you --?

A: Some of the package, I was influential -- you know, I influenced them. But I also was able to get things that sold. I remember when I first went in. Now I knew nothing! I didn't even know there was milk in dark chocolate. You know, I'd just say chocolate. I never thought about -- but (laughs) I was fairly new and it was a holiday and a man came and showed me something. Now I can't think of what it was. But it was a little knick-knack. And I thought it was so cute. So I said, "Well, I'll buy 100 dozen." He just -- he said, "Do you think you want that many?" I said, "Well, I think we'll sell it." You know. But I'll never forget the expression on his face. So then I thought, "Gee, what

am I doing? (laughter) What am I doing?" We sold them. But, oh, gosh. But I do -- you know, in retrospect, there are many funny things that happened. But it was a very, very interesting job. And then I went to Europe a few times to buy food. But then I told them, "Please don't send me. It isn't worth it." Because I would have to buy too big quantities and, for things that I didn't know whether they were any good or whether people would want them, it wasn't worth it. I said, "I'll find distributors and let them sell it to me." So then I used to go every other year.

Q: Just to look at what they had.

A: Yeah, and --

Q: And their packaging, in Europe, is magnificent.

A: Yes. But I was really at the beginning, when they had just started selling, really, in a big way. Like I bought some candy in Belgium. But they couldn't make the quantities we needed. And also, I was afraid to buy, because I didn't know what their quality was like and what it would be like.

Q: And shipping costs would probably be exorbitant.

A: Yeah. So eventually that stopped. But it was still a very interesting job.

Q: Tell us some of the funny stories that you can think of.

(laughter)

A: Oh, gosh.

Q: How long were you a candy buyer?

A: Oh, I was for quite a while, from, [and?] '64 to '85, about 20 years. Yes. And it was very good, you know, the things -- and --

Q: So your career at Bamberger's lasted --

A: Oh, fif-- from '39 to '85.

Q: Phenomenal.

A: Nowadays, things like that don't happen. And everybody was always very, very nice to me, I must say.

Q: Because you were nice.

M1: That's right.

A: Well, I don't know. But they were --

Q: and you were doing a fanta--

A: A good job.

Q: You had a fantastic reputation, Demi kept telling me.

A: Yeah. I really did. Because I think I was one of the biggest candy buyers in the country.

Q: That's right.

A: Yeah. You can rea-- you know, in several -- that's what I

--

Q: Let's stick with this. I want to hear some stories first.  
And then we'll go to [them?].

A: I can't think of any. I haven't thought about them.

Q: All right. Let me ask you -- you mentioned some of your friends in Newark -- some of the Greek traditions that your family maintained, whether it was in Newark or Plainfield, whatever.

A: Well, other than -- we --

Q: Did you celebrate your father's name day?

A: Always, yes. That was the only day we celebrated. And we always had company. And at that time, you know, the house was open. You didn't have invitations. People just dropped in. So we always had a big -- I never thought about it. Yes. And then, when we came to Newark, my parents were very close friends with the Adams and we were there all the time and they were at our house. And traditions, other than celebrating my father's name day and going to church Easter (laughs) and Christmas and visiting my uncles on their name day --

Q: Never celebrated your mother's name day, did you?

A: Yes, she was --

Q: Oh, good!

A: -- [Vasiliki, so that was?] New Year's. So we always had a party at New Year's. Yeah, I never even thought about that. We automatically -- all day New Year's Day was her day. Yeah. But didn't celebrate my name day.

Q: They just said, "Happy name day."

(laughter)

M1: [Savinai day?].

Q: But they celebrated your birthdays, right?

A: Oh, yes, always. You know, we always had like a cake and all.

Q: The kids -- we did too.

A: Yeah. (laughs) You know, I never thought about it. They never celebrated my name day.

Q: They would just wish me happy name day and give me [something?].

A: Oh, yeah. Most of the time nobody ever said anything.

M1: Most of the time, it was the male, I think.

A: Yeah.

Q: Well, we celebrated my mother's name day too --

M1: Really?



Q: -- because my mother --

A: Yeah, my mother too.

Q: Vasiliki. And --

M1: That's New Year's.

Q: Yeah.

A: You know, I hadn't thought about that. And I haven't --

Q: Not in a big way, the way we celebrated my father's name day.

A: No. Yeah.

M1: Oh, yeah.

Q: But Mother was smart. Mother always gave herself a birthday present at Christmastime and on her name day. She gave herself (laughter) a present --

A: Yeah.

Q: -- besides our giving her a present!

A: Yeah.

M1: Smart!

A: She sure was.

M1: [That's right?].

A: She was --

Q: [But?] so your house was open on New Year's Day --

A: Yeah.

Q: -- and then -- came to wish your mother a happy name day.  
That's (inaudible).

A: Yeah, and she always prepared things and -- you know.

Q: Like what did she prepare, for your father and for herself?

A: Well she made [goulanka and gourambiadis?] and bread. And she just was a great cook. And she experimented a lot with wine and things. And she made a l-- see, when my mother ca-- when my uncle brought her, he evidently had an -- I mean, this is between us -- an American girlfriend. So my mother lived with them. And she learned her English and her way of life through this lady. So she'd make him apple pie and --

M1: She Americanized.

A: -- she would do --

M1: Yeah.

A: -- yeah -- things like that. But she was a very, very good cook and she cooked many Greek dishes, you know, avgo lemono and all that stuff. And we had a lot of company, most of the time.

Q: I'll bet --

A: And the com--

Q: Go ahead. I'm sorry. Go ahead.

A: No, that's fine. And had a full table of food, you know, typical Greek.

Q: Sunday dinners? Family sat down together.

A: Yes. We always sat down as a family. And in fact, we always had dinner. My father would come home and we'd have dinner together.

Q: With the [kids?].

A: Yeah. And we'd have to speak Greek at the table.

Q: Oh, that's interesting.

M1: Is that right?

A: Yeah.

M1: And you had to speak Greek. That's --

Q: How --?

A: Yeah.

Q: And your Greek is good, right?

A: Oh, yeah. Now I'm forgetting a lot --

Q: Well --

A: -- because who do you use it --?

M1: Yeah, that's true.

Q: Right. Right.

A: You know. But it was good. And going to Greek school, in retrospect -- you know, at that point, I didn't like it. I told you. But we had that wonderful Greek teacher -- who did they have in Elizabeth for a long time, that --? He was a professor from Turkey, a college professor, that had come here. And then he was teaching Greek. So our classes were really interesting, in retrospect. He would have astronomy and literature. It wasn't a typical -- [Phokenakis?], his name was. And as I say, he was a college professor in Turkey and had -- I don't know how they had come. But he was a very elegant man and his wife and family were very nice. I mean, I didn't know that then but I got to know them better later. And so the Greek classes were very, very interesting, you know, religion and -- he really taught us --

M1: That's good.

A: -- different subjects that were -- but at the time, I wasn't appreciating it.

Q: What was your father's name, first name?

A: Demetrios.

Q: Demetrios. So you sai-- how about celebration? I want -- see, I don't want to forget anything. Did anyone help you when your family first came, like your father? You said his

compatriots helped him?

A: Oh, yes. Evidently, he lived with him. And they were older than he. Because I have a cousin in Minneapolis whose mother did a survey of all the family as they came in and she said when my father arrived he lived in a house with quite a few other men. They all lived together, I guess. And they would send him, as he was the youngest, to the bar for kegs of (laughter) beer. So I guess he had a good time. But, yeah, he came and he stayed with friends. And then --

Q: What did he do when he first came, before he opened up his own business in Plainfield?

A: I don't know. I really don't know.

Q: What business was your uncle in?

A: They were all florists.

Q: Oh, all right.

A: Yeah. And as a matter of fact, I do know --

**End - Katherine Pantages**